

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-02 L-02 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /083 W

----- 015824

R 020836Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2873

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

USMISSION GENEVA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MANILA 5739

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: ELAB, RP

SUBJECT: LABOR DAY CELEBRATION AT PRESIDENTIAL PALACE

REF: A) MANILA 5668 B) MANILA 5673

BEGIN SUMMARY: UNDER LABOR DAY THEME "UNITY IN CRISIS", LABOR IN ESSENCE ONCE AGAIN PLEDGED LOYALTY TO NEW SOCIETY WHILE PRESIDENT MARCOS PROMISED TO PROCEED WITH "DEMOCRATIZATION OF WEALTH" AND "REVOLUTION OF THE POOR." UNABASHEDLY SEEKING JUMP ON GOP POLITICAL BANDWAGON, LABOR MOVEMENT ANNOUNCED ITS SUPPORT OF REASSESSMENT PHILIPPINE NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS INCLUDING MILITARY TIES WITH U.S. MARCOS DECLARED THAT RETURNING STRENGTH OF PESO WAS BEST PRESENT POLITICAL LEADERSHIP COULD OFFER. FESTIVITIES AT PRESIDENTIAL PALACE SMACKED OF RATHER WELL-ORCHESTRATED MUTUAL ADMIRATION SOCIETY OPERATION. SERIOUS LABOR UNIFICATION MOVES MAY YET COME, BUT THEY WERE SADLY LACKING AS LABOR DAY 1975 CAME AND WENT. END SUMMARY.

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1. UNDER BANNER PROCLAIMING "UNITY IN CRISIS" THEME, OVER 1,000 TRADE UNIONISTS CROWDED INTO PRESIDENTIAL PALACE'S MAKARLIKA HALL ON MAY 1 TO CELEBRATE THIRD LABOR DAY UNDER MARTIAL LAW. FACT THAT DATE ALSO MARKED THEIR 21ST WEDDING ANNIVERSARY, ADDED OFTEN BANTERING AND PERSONAL NOTE TO PARTICIPATION OF PRESIDENT AND MRS. MARCOS. IN ESSENCE, LABOR ONCE AGAIN PLEDGED LOYALTY TO NEW SOCIETY WHILE PRESIDENT PROMISED TO PROCEED WITH "DEMOCRATIZATION OF WEALTH" AND "REVOLUTION OF THE POOR".

2. FOLLOWING READING OF TAME LABOR MANIFESTO (SEE REF B) BY JERRY MONTEMAYOR (PRESIDENT, FFF), ROBERTO OCA DELIVERED PRINCIPAL LABOR ADDRESS. ALTHOUGH IT HAD NOT BEEN EASY FOR LABOR TO GIVE UP RIGHT TO STRIKE, HE SAID, SACRIFICES MADE UNDER MARTIAL LAW WERE BEGINNING BEAR FRUIT. HE URGED WORKERS TO BE MILITANT AND STRONG AND TO UNITE TO FIGHT RECESSION. ANNOUNCING HIS ACCEPTANCE OF CHAIRMANSHIP NATIONAL LABOR COORDINATING CENTER (NLCC - SEE REF A), OCA PROMISED THAT "ALL VIEWS WOULD BE CONSIDERED." FINALLY, HE RENEWED LABOR'S PLEDGE TO SUPPORT PRESIDENT "WITHOUT RESERVATION".

3. UNABASHEDLY SEEKING JUMP ON GOP POLITICAL BANDWAGON, LABOR MOVEMENT ANNOUNCED ITS SUPPORT OF PHILIPPINE REASSESSMENT ITS NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS IN WAKE INDOCHINA DEVELOPMENTS. DEMOCRITO MENDOZA (PRESIDENT, ALU) READ "RESOLUTION ON BASES" PASSED APRIL 30 BY TRIPARTITE LABOR CONFERENCE MEETING IN QUEZON CITY. RESOLUTION EXPRESSED TRIPARTITE SUPPORT FOR: 1) REASSESSMENT NATIONAL SECURITY POSTURE AND FILIPINO MILITARY TIES WITH THE U.S. IN LIGHT NATIONAL INTEREST. 2) RE-EXAMINATION OF SITUATION IN SE ASIA ARAA, AND 3) NATIONAL UNITY IN FACE OF CRISIS.

4. MAIN ATTRACTION LABOR DAY MORNING CEREMONIES (CARRIED LIVE ON NATIONAL TV AND RADIO, REPEATED DURING EVENING HOURS) WAS PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS, HIGHLIGHTS OF WHICH FOLLOW. STRENGTH OF PESO IS RETURNING, AND THIS BEST PRESENT POLITICAL LEADERSHIP COULD OFFER. RATE OF INFLATION HAD BEEN BROUGHT DOWN FROM 30 PCT TO BELOW 10 PCT -- POSSIBLY TO 8 PCT. STRESS WOULD CONTINUE BE ON FIGHTING INFLATION, NOT ON RAISING WAGES. AFTER TWO AND A HALF YEARS OF MARTIAL LAW, HISTORIC UNEMPLOYMENT RATE OF 8 TO 10 PCT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HAD BEEN REDUCED TO 4.2 PCT, ALTHOUGH UNDEREMPLOYMENT STILL WIDESPREAD. (NOTE: LABOR SECRETARY OPLE RECENTLY PRIVATELY ESTIMATED UNEMPLOYMENT RUNNING AT ABOUT 7 PCT, AND OTHER OBSERVERS BELIEVE IT LIKELY HIGHER THAN THAT. END NOTE.)

5. HEALTH OF ECONOMY WAS MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR FOR WORKING MAN, AND PHILIPPINES HAD FARED BETTER THAN MOST, NOT JUST IN ASIA BUT WORLDWIDE. PHILIPPINES WAS A FREE ENTER-

PRISE SOCIETY, SAID MARCOS, IN WHICH GOVERNMENT WOULD SET TONE BUT PRIVATE SECTOR MUST CARRY OUT PROGRAMS. NOT THE GOVERNMENT OF CABINET BUT ONLY THE LABORING SEGMENT COULD MAKE THE NEW SOCIETY WORK. LABOR AND MANAGEMENT GROUPS WERE CONGRATULATED FOR THEIR UNITY EFFORTS.

6. COMMENT. WHOLE AFFAIR SMACKED OF RATHER WELL-ORCHESTRATED MUTUAL ADMIRATION SOCIETY OPERATION. WHEN ASKED BY LABATT WHY LABOR HAD FELT IT NECESSARY BECOME INVOLVED IN EXTRANEOUS ISSUE OF U.S.-PHILIPPINE MILITARY TIES, MENDOZA VERY SHEEPISHLY AVOIDED ANSWERING. PRESIDENT PAID LIP SERVICE TO GIVING "UNIFIED" LABOR MORE IMPORTANT ROLE IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESS OF GOVERNMENT, BUT IT WAS OBVIOUS HE WAS UNIMPORESSED BY NLCC UNIFICATION GIMMICK. LABOR, FOR ITS PART, WAS ALMOST UNNATURALLY DOCILE IN ITS ECONOMIC DEMANDS. SERIOUS UNIFICATION MOVES MAY YET COME, BUT THEY WERE SADLY LACKING AS LABOR DAY 1975 CAME AND WENT. SULLIVAN

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